

Attachment to
SC-01042/59

HIGHEST PRIORITY REQUIREMENTS FOR TALENT COVERAGE

It is of the utmost importance to US National Security to establish the extent to which the USSR has deployed its ICBM weapons system. Soviet progress in acquiring an operational capability is indicated by their known test activity and evidence that the weapons themselves are being put into production.

Studies over the past two years by the US Intelligence Community have concluded that TALENT photography offers the only reasonable chance of obtaining data on the location and characteristics of operational ICBM launch sites and that, to best advantage, only during the period of construction. Other means are estimated to have a negligible chance of locating Soviet ICBM sites.

Although the construction of ICBM launch sites is believed to be in progress, we have no solid information as to where these may be located. We are therefore compelled to conduct a search for operational sites.

We are not, however, wholly without some leads as to how and where to search and on the basis of deduction and fragmentary clues we have selected

-2-

certain areas.

On the basis of deduction alone we are led to believe that the Soviet ICBM weapons system is tied to the rail network at least for logistic support in either fixed site or rail mobile concepts. On the basis of evidence alone (and that extremely limited) we have been led to pinpoint Polyarnyy Ural, in the Western Arctic littoral, as the most suspicious possible location of an operational launch site.

Study of the Soviet rail network for potential operational launch sites has led us to select the following search areas:

The Urals (including Nizhniyy Salda, Zlatoust, Sverdlovsk, Perm and Ufa),

The Kotlas-Salekhard area (including Polyarnyy Ural),

The Kuznets Basin (to include Krasnoyarsk).

The first priority area for search is the Urals. In order, however, to assure satisfactory coverage of this area, it may be necessary to conduct two missions. If the immediate Polyarnyy Ural area cannot be included in one of these missions it will require an additional flight. The remainder of the Kotlas-Salekhard area and the Kuznets Basin are of lesser priority. Their coverage should depend upon the knowledge obtained in the Urals.

-3-

Coverage of the primary target area would provide information of invaluable significance on the status of the Soviet ICBM program, even if negative on the identification of ICBM launch sites. Fortuitously, it includes targets of utmost importance to our appreciation of Soviet nuclear weapons production (Kyshtym, Verkhne Neyvinskiy, and Nizhnaya Tura); routes of access to it can permit acquisition of information on missile (and space) research and development (points on the Vladimirovka-Lake Balkash, Kapustin Yar, and Tyura Tam test ranges and possible could include the Tyura Tam range-head itself); ICBM production (Sverdlovsk) and ballistic missile submarine construction (Severodvinsk). Furthermore, the importance of obtaining photography of the Urals area should itself not be underestimated, for while we know this complex is a major Soviet industrial center we have had virtually no access to it.